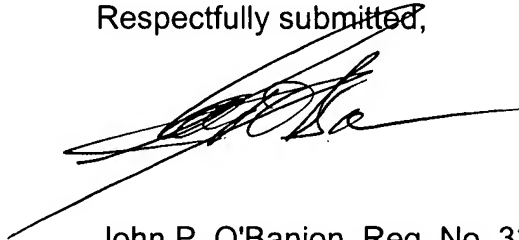


REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

This Preliminary Amendment is submitted in connection with this continuation application. Entry of this Preliminary Amendment and expedited examination are respectfully requested. The Applicant also respectfully requests a telephone interview with the Examiner in the event that there are questions regarding this response, or if the next action on the merits is not an allowance of all pending claims.

Date: 3/16/04

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'John P. O'Banion', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

John P. O'Banion, Reg. No. 33,201
O'BANION & RITCHEY LLP
400 Capitol Mall, Suite 1550
Sacramento, CA 95814
(916) 498-1010